

IN THE CLAIMS:

Rewrite claim 2 as follows:

2. (Amended) An image comparison method, comprising:

detecting existence of a photograph object;

capturing a plurality of images of the photograph object in a case where the photograph object is detected;

detecting a press of a button for check confirmation;

comparing at least one of the plurality of captured images with information concerning previously memorized registration images when the press of the button is detected; and

outputting a comparison result.

Cancel claims 5-16, and add new claims 17-28 as follows:

17. An image comparison apparatus, comprising:

an object detection sensor for detecting a person to be photographed;

a camera for creating at least one photographic image of said person upon detection by said object detection sensor; and

a check start button for beginning a comparison between said at least one photographic image and photographic images previously stored by said image comparison apparatus in order to determine whether a match exists.

18. The image comparison apparatus of claim 17 further comprising:

an image comparison center apparatus for capturing said at least one photographic image created by said camera and comparing it with said photographic images previously stored.

19. The image comparison apparatus of claim 17 further comprising:

an illumination device for illuminating a subject to be photographed by said camera.

20. The image comparison apparatus of claim 17 further comprising:

a check count display for displaying a number of times a check operation has been conducted.

21. The image comparison apparatus of claim 17 further comprising:

a check result display for displaying results of whether a match exists.

22. The image comparison apparatus of claim 17 further comprising:

a personal identification key for receiving a personal identification code input to be compared with a previously stored personal identification code.

23. The image comparison apparatus of claim 17 further comprising:

a card reader for reading a personal code stored on a card, said personal code to be compared with a previously stored personal code.

24. The method of claim 2 further comprising:

determining that an image acquired immediately after the check start button is pressed is not suitable for comparison; and

selecting a second photographic image for comparison, said second photographic image having been created by said camera prior to said check start button being pressed.

25. The method of claim 24 further comprising:

determining that said second image is not suitable for comparison; and

selecting a third photographic image for comparison, said third photographic image having been created by said camera prior to said second photographic image.

26. The method of claim 24 further comprising:

determining that said second image is not suitable for comparison; and

comparing a personal identification code received at a personal identification key with a previously stored personal identification code to determine whether they match.

27. The method of claim 24 further comprising:

determining that said second image is not suitable for comparison; and

comparing a personal identification code read from an identification card with a previously stored personal identification code to determine whether they match.

28. An image comparison center apparatus, comprising:

an image capture portion for capturing a plurality of photographic images of a person received from a camera;

a memory coupled to said image capture portion for storing said plurality of captured photographic images;

a registration file for storing image data of registered persons; and

a processing unit for successively comparing said plurality of captured photographic images with said image data stored by said registration file in order to determine whether a match exists.

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